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ABSTRACT

In 1989, the Health Occupations Advisory Committee surveyed health care agencies throughout New Mexico about their current and planned employment needs in nursing and allied health fields. The survey was mailed to approximately 500 hospitals, county health offices, outpatient and long-term care facilities, employment agencies, practice groups, and other institutions employing allied personnel. Study findings, based on a 25% response rate, included the following: (1) employment needs were and were expected to remain most pressing in the field of nursing, with the greatest need being for nurse assistants, followed by associate degree nurses, bachelor's degree nurses, and licensed practical nurses; (2) in the allied health fields, training areas appeared most critical for home health aides, physical therapists, emergency medical technicians at all levels, radiologic technicians, radiologic technologists, medical secretaries, unit clerks, medical technologists, laboratory technicians, and respiratory therapists; and (3) physical therapy assistant and occupational therapy assistant were two positions with more than twice as many openings projected in 5 years as there were currently licensed practitioners. Attached tables present: (1) current vacancies and the 5-year projected need; (2) a comparison of current and projected need to those already licensed; and (3) the need partitioned between Albuquerque and the rest of New Mexico. The survey instrument is also included. (JSP)

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# Allied Health Occupations in New Mexico

## A Survey of Current and Five-Year Projected Need

## 1989 — 1994

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**August 1991**

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# Allied Health Occupations in New Mexico
# A Survey of Current and Five-Year Projected Need
# 1989 — 1994

Five of the ten fastest growing industries in New Mexico are health related. To help determine the training needs in the areas of nursing and allied health, the Health Occupations Advisory Committee in November 1989 surveyed institutions throughout New Mexico about their current and planned employment needs in these fields. A copy of the survey form is in the appendix. Health care agencies surveyed included hospitals, county health offices, day surgery facilities, outpatient treatment centers, psychiatric hospitals, long term care centers, public schools, rehabilitation centers, large physician practice groups, social service agencies, insurance companies, temporary nursing employment agencies, home health care agencies, public health clinics, university student health centers and independent nurse practitioners. Those organizations cooperating in conducting the survey were New Mexico Hospital Association, New Mexico Health Resources, Inc., New Mexico Primary Care Association, and Vocational Education Division of the New Mexico Department of Education. The data analysis was conducted by the New Mexico Hospital Association, and the final report was prepared by Doña Ana Branch Community College.

The survey was mailed to approximately 500 institutions, agencies and practice groups employing allied health personnel in the state. Of these, 135 useable responses were received for approximately 25 percent response rate. Because the responses were not categorized as to type or size of institution, it is not possible to extrapolate the information received beyond the institutions which responded. In other words, the survey does not give information about the total health care personnel needs in the state, nor can it be considered a sample of the needs of all health care institutions in New Mexico. Assuming the responses represent a cross-section of employers of health care personnel, the survey does indicate the areas of greatest need for trained personnel in health care in New Mexico and something of the magnitude of that need. Those 135 institutions, agencies, businesses and practices responding indicated that among them over 5,900 allied, technical and nursing professionals will be needed in the next five years.

The attached tables and figures present in tabular form and graphically the information garnered from the 135 respondents to the 1989 New Mexico Allied Health Needs Assessment Survey. Table 1 shows the current vacancies occurring in the nursing and health professions, and the five-year projected need, thus indicating the magnitude of increased personnel needs in the various areas. This information is presented graphically in Figures 1 through 4. Table 2 compares the current and projected needs to those currently licensed in allied health professions in New Mexico. Table 3 presents the needs partitioned between Albuquerque and the rest of New Mexico.

The needs are and will be the greatest in nursing fields. Within nursing, the need will be greatest for nurse assistants, then ADNs (associate degree in nursing), then BSNs (bachelor degree in nursing), then LPNs (licensed practical nurse).

The allied health fields also have current shortages of personnel, and generally projected shortages are in the areas in which shortages now exist. Based on both the absolute numbers of those who will be needed in the future and the proportionate number of openings currently unfilled in the field, the following allied health training areas appear to be critical: home health aides, physical therapists, emergency medical technicians (all levels), radiologic technicians, radiologic technologists, medical secretaries and unit clerks, medical technologists and laboratory technicians, and respiratory therapists.

In analyzing the data, a survey was also made of the numbers currently licensed in the fields under study and a comparison made of the number currently licensed to the five-year projected personnel needs in that field. Table 2 also supports the need for training in particular areas: physical therapy assistant and occupational therapy assistant being areas where more than twice as many openings are projected in five years as there are currently licensed individuals.

Finally, the surveys received were analyzed according to the geography of the state; i.e., Albuquerque, and the rest of the state. Table 3 shows dramatically that the need for health care professionals in five years will be most critical outside Albuquerque.

The intent of this survey and its analysis was to attain some understanding of the needs for nursing and allied health personnel in New Mexico including the areas of need, projected needs, and the magnitude of the needs. Although the survey was not administered or analyzed in a way that statistical certainty can be attached to the findings, the indications and directions should provide some guidance to those who will pursue this problem further.

## *Table 1* Statewide Need — Current Vacancies and 5-Year Projection

| Health Occupation Category | Number of Institutions Employing Category | Number of Current Vacancies | Number of Openings per Year | 5-Year Projection of Vacancies per Year | Percent Increase over 5 Years |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ADN | 81 | 185 | 518 | 1,342 | 159% |
| BSN | 77 | 141 | 409 | 1,097 | 168% |
| LPN | 67 | 85 | 221 | 436 | 97% |
| Nursing Assistant / Aide | 42 | 57 | 445 | 1,471 | 231% |
| Physical Therapist | 51 | 39 | 56 | 139 | 148% |
| Radiologic Technician | 26 | 22 | 41 | 106 | 159% |
| Home Health Aide | 23 | 18 | 52 | 181 | 248% |
| Occupational Therapist | 34 | 17 | 28 | 58 | 107% |
| Medical Tech. | 25 | 13 | 36 | 94 | 161% |
| Medical Secretary | 27 | 13 | 42 | 107 | 155% |
| Unit Clerk | 30 | 12 | 51 | 128 | 151% |
| EMT-Basic | 9 | 10 | 41 | 133 | 224% |
| Records Technician | 20 | 8 | 16 | 35 | 119% |
| EMT-Intermediate | 5 | 6 | 20 | 76 | 280% |
| Sonographer | 9 | 6 | 9 | 26 | 189% |
| Respiratory Therapist (2 year) | 13 | 6 | 21 | 55 | 162% |
| Lab Technician | 20 | 6 | 24 | 47 | 96% |
| Medical Assistant | 11 | 5 | 8 | 13 | 63% |
| Surgical Technician | 16 | 5 | 17 | 60 | 253% |
| Respiratory Technician (1 year) | 13 | 5 | 20 | 43 | 115% |
| Nuclear Tech. | 12 | 4 | 10 | 27 | 170% |
| Cytotech. | 7 | 3 | 6 | 18 | 200% |
| RT (4 year) | 9 | 3 | 11 | 30 | 173% |
| Physical Therapist Assistant | 10 | 2 | 11 | 36 | 227% |
| EMT-Paramedic | 5 | 2 | 28 | 90 | 221% |
| Dental Hygienist | 7 | 2 | 2 | 9 | 350% |
| Biomed. Elec. Tech. | 6 | 1 | 2 | 13 | 550% |
| Echocardiographer | 5 | 1 | 7 | 15 | 114% |
| Dental Assistant | 9 | 1 | 3 | 15 | 400% |
| Occupational Therapy Asst. | 9 | 1 | 3 | 15 | 60% |
| Histological Technician | 9 | 1 | 4 | 18 | 350% |

**Table 2** **Comparison of Current and Projected Need to Numbers Currently Licensed in New Mexico**

| Health Occupation Category | Current Number of Openings per Year | 5-Year Projected Number of Openings per Year | Current Number of Licensees | Percentage of 5-Year Projected Need to Current Number of Licensees |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Physical Therapist Assistant | 11 | 36 | 28 | 128.57% |
| Occupational Therapist Assistant | 5 | 8 | 8 | 100.00% |
| Total Respiratory Care (1 Year and 2 Year) | 41 | 98 | 180 | 54.44% |
| Total RN (ADN and BSN) | 927 | 2,439 | 8,856 | 27.54% |
| EMT-Paramedic | 28 | 90 | 350 | 25.71% |
| Physical Therapist | 56 | 139 | 562 | 24.73% |
| Occupational Therapist | 28 | 58 | 255 | 22.75% |
| LPN | 221 | 436 | 2,256 | 19.33% |
| EMT-Intermediate | 20 | 76 | 400 | 19.00% |
| Respiratory Care (4 Year) | 11 | 30 | 350 | 8.57% |
| EMT-Basic | 41 | 133 | 2,900 | 4.59% |
| Dental Hygienist | 2 | 9 | 650 | 1.38% |
| Dental Assistant | 3 | 15 | 1,100 | 1.36% |

Table 3 **Health Occupations 5-Year Projected Need in Albuquerque and Rest of New Mexico**

| Health Occupation Category | 5-Year Projection | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Albuquerque | | | Rest of New Mexico | |
| | Number Needed | Percentage of Projected Need | | Number Needed | Percentage of Projected Need |
| Dental Assistant | 0 | 0% | | 15 | 100% |
| EMT-Intermediate | 0 | 0% | | 76 | 100% |
| Nursing Assistant/Aide | 70 | 5% | | 1,401 | 95% |
| RT (4 Year) | 2 | 7% | | 28 | 93% |
| Dental Hygienist | 1 | 11% | | 8 | 89% |
| Surgical Technician | 7 | 12% | | 53 | 88% |
| Occupational Therapist Assistant | 1 | 12% | | 7 | 88% |
| Respiratory Technician (1 Year) | 6 | 14% | | 37 | 86% |
| Records Technician | 5 | 14% | | 30 | 86% |
| Unit Clerk | 22 | 18% | | 106 | 83% |
| EMT-Basic | 30 | 23% | | 103 | 77% |
| Lab Technician | 11 | 23% | | 36 | 77% |
| Physical Therapist Assistant | 9 | 25% | | 27 | 75% |
| Medical Secretary | 28 | 26% | | 79 | 74% |
| ADN | 363 | 27% | | 979 | 73% |
| LPN | 133 | 30% | | 303 | 70% |
| Medical Assistant | 4 | 31% | | 9 | 69% |
| BSN | 339 | 31% | | 758 | 69% |
| Home Health Aide | 58 | 32% | | 123 | 68% |
| Radiologic Technician | 34 | 33% | | 72 | 68% |
| Medical Technician | 31 | 33% | | 63 | 67% |
| Occupational Therapist | 21 | 36% | | 37 | 64% |
| Respiratory Therapist (2 year) | 20 | 36% | | 35 | 64% |
| Physical Therapist | 51 | 37% | | 88 | 63% |
| EMT-Paramedic | 34 | 38% | | 56 | 62% |
| Sonographer | 10 | 38% | | 16 | 62% |
| Nuclear Tech. | 11 | 41% | | 16 | 59% |
| Biomedical Elec. Tech. | 7 | 54% | | 6 | 46% |
| Histological Tech. | 10 | 56% | | 8 | 44% |
| Echocardiographer | 9 | 60% | | 6 | 40% |
| Cytotech. | 11 | 61% | | 7 | 39% |
| Total Responses | | 16% | | | 84% |

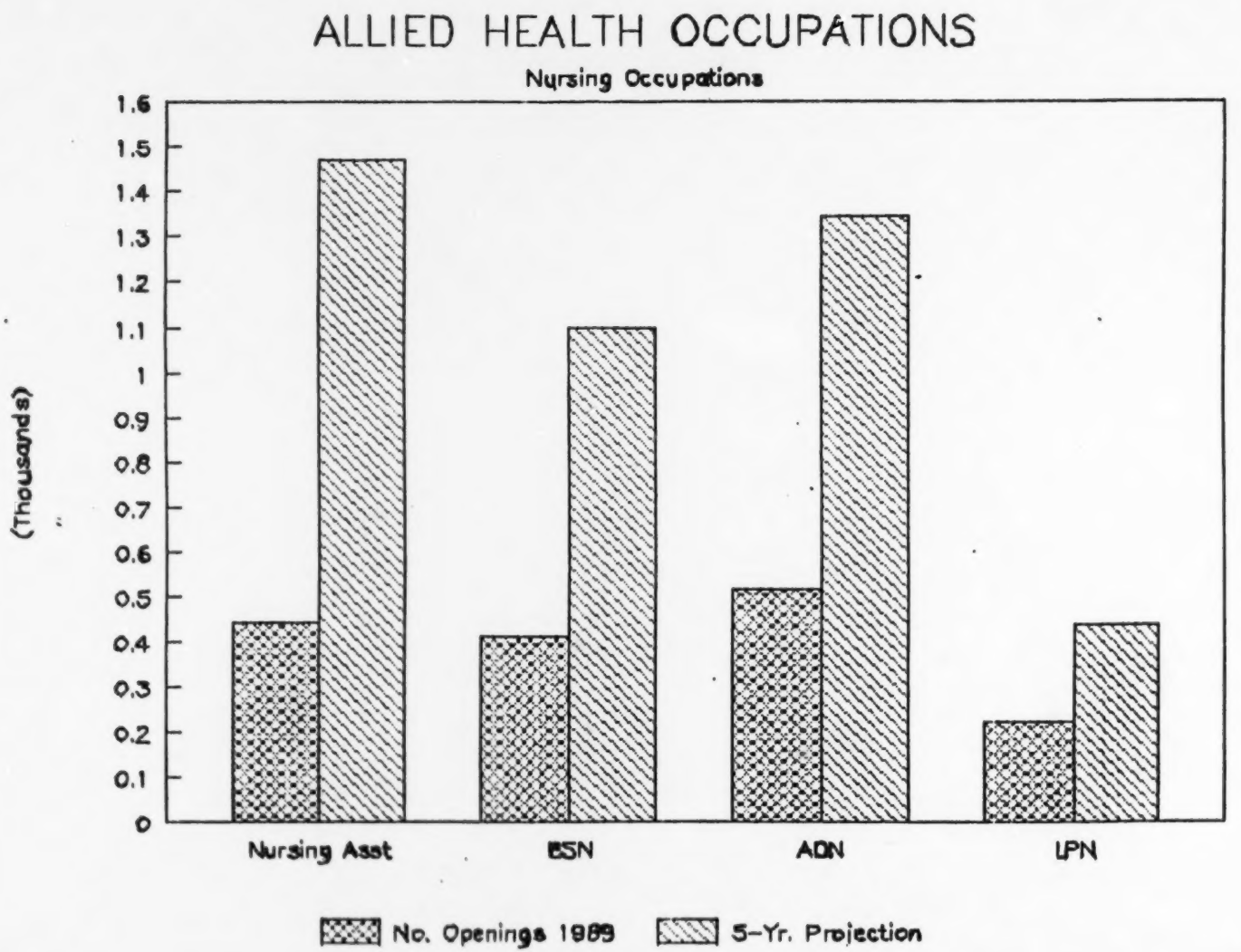


Figure 1 Nursing Occupations, Current and 5-Year Projected Openings

**Figure 2** Biomedical Elec. Tech., Dental Assistant, Histological Tech., Dental Hygienist, EMT-Intermediate, Surgical Tech., Home Health Aide, Physical Therapy Assistant, and EMT-Basic Allied Health Occupations, Current and 5-Year Projected Openings

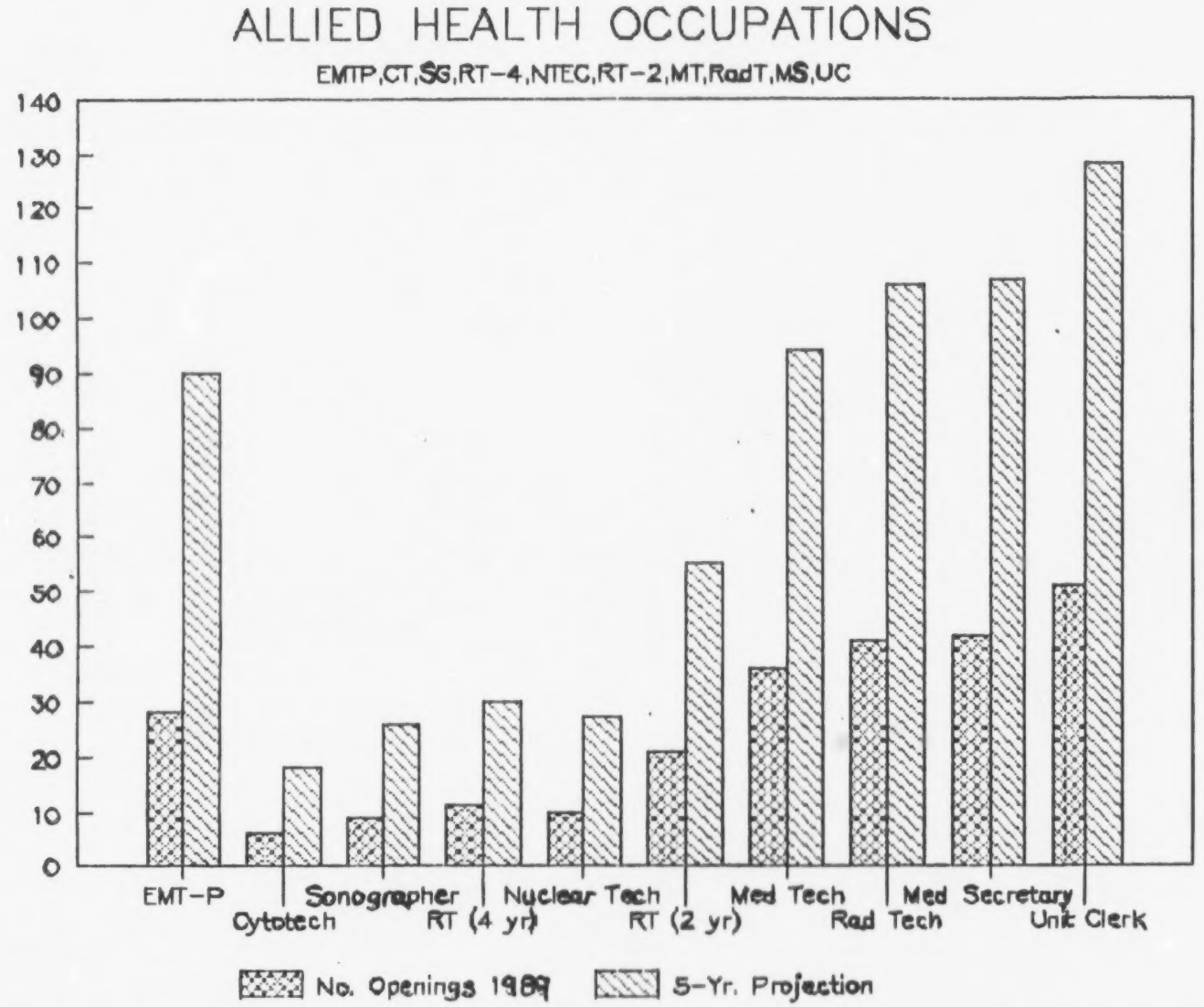


*Figure 3* **EMT-Paramedic, Cytotech., Sonographer, RT (4 Year), Nuclear Tech., Medical Tech., Radiologic Technician, Medical Secretary, Unit Clerk Allied Health Occupations, Current and 5-Year Projected Openings**

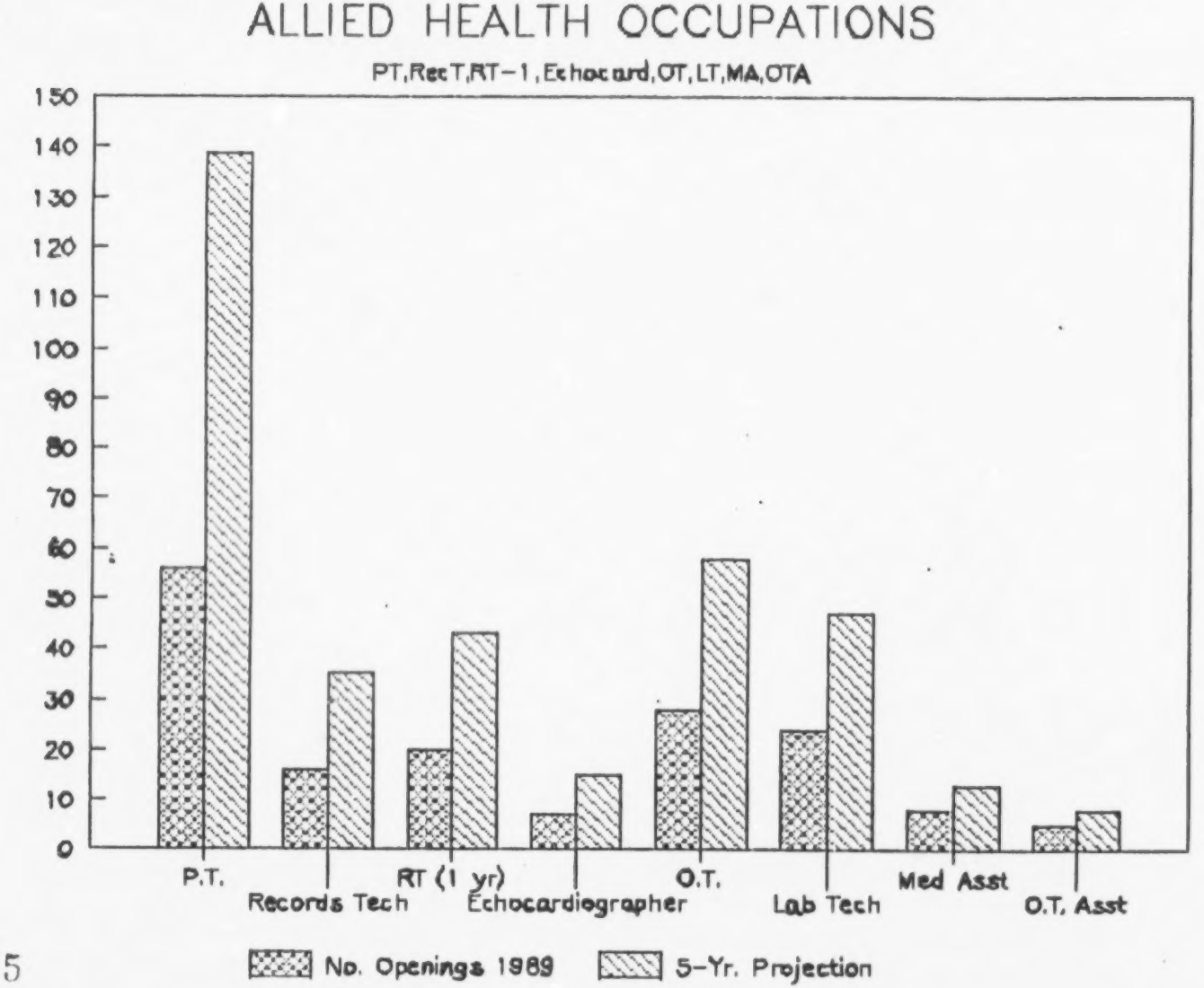


*Figure 4*

**Physical Therapist, Records Technician, Respiratory Technician (1 Year), Echocardiographer, Occupational Therapist, Lab Technician, Medical Assistant, Occupational Therapy Assistant Allied Health Occupations, Current and 5-Year Projected Openings**

**Appendix 1989 New Mexico Allied Health Needs Assessment Survey**

November,1989

The following organizations are cooperating to survey training needs for allied health professionals in New Mexico:

New Mexico Hospital Association
New Mexico Health Resources, Inc.
New Mexico Primary Care Association
New Mexico Health Care Association
New Mexico Home Health Association
Vocational Education Division of New Mexico Department of Education
New Mexico Health Occupations Advisory Committee

Information from you about your hiring needs for allied health personnel within the next five years will guide plans for training these vital workers in New Mexico.

Please take a few minutes to complete the survey inside and on the back. In the chart fill in the eight column for each category of health professional that you employ or anticipate hiring. If you do not employ a listed category of health personnel, leave that row blank. Then turn to the back page to write any comments you think will be useful in our efforts to meet critical training needs in your area. If there are needs we have not listed on this survey, please include these in the "other" row. Finally, please return both pages of the completed form by November 20 to:

Virginia Goodrich, EVP
New Mexico Hospital Association
P.O. Box 36090
Albaquerque, NM 87126

or fax your results to 889-3053.

If you have any questions, feel free to call James L. McLaughlin, Ed.D., Associate Provost, Dona Ana Branch Community College, at 527-7520 or Virginia Goodrich, New Mexico Hospital Association, at 889-3393.

Comments:

Responding Agency_____

Adress_____City, State, Zip_____

County_____

Name of Respondent_____Title_____

Type of Agency:

___ Hospital ___ Home Health Agency

___ Long Term Care ___ Primary Care Facility

___ Public Health Office ___ Ambulance Service

___ Other_____

| | Do you employ this category? (Yes/No) | Number of current openings | Estimated number of openings yearly | Estimated number of annual openings over next 5 years | Average salary $000/year | Are qualified applicants readily available to you? (Yes/No) | Is there a need for additional training opportun-ities for this category in your area? (Yes/No) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Home Health Aide | | | | | | | |
| Unit Clerk | | | | | | | |
| Nursing Assist./Aid (NA) | | | | | | | |
| Nurse,LPN | | | | | | | |
| Nurse, RN (ADN) | | | | | | | |
| Nurse, RN (BSN) | | | | | | | |
| Physical Therapy Assist. (12yr.) | | | | | | | |

| | Do you employ this category? (Yes/No) | Number of current openings | Estimated number of openings yearly | Estimated number of annual openings over next 5 years | Average salary $000/year | Are qualified applicants readily available to you? (Yes/No) | Is there a need for additional training opportunities for this category in your area? (Yes/No) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Physical Therapist (14yr.) | | | | | | | |
| Occupation Therapy Assist. | | | | | | | |
| Occupation Therapist (4yr.) | | | | | | | |
| Respiratory Therapy Technician (CRRT) (1yr.) | | | | | | | |
| Respiratory Therapist (RRT) (2yr.) | | | | | | | |

| | Do you employ this category? (Yes/No) | Number of current openings | Estimated number of openings yearly | Estimated number of annual openings over next 5 years | Average salary $000/year | Are qualified applicants readily available to you? (Yes/No) | Is there a need for additional training opportunities for this category in your area? (Yes/No) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Respiratory Therapist (4yr.) | | | | | | | |
| OR/Surgical Technician | | | | | | | |
| Nuclear Medicine Tech. (2yr.) | | | | | | | |
| Sonographer (2yr.) | | | | | | | |
| Radiologic Tech. (RT) | | | | | | | |
| Echocardiographer | | | | | | | |
| EMT Basic | | | | | | | |

| | Do you employ this category? (Yes/No) | Number of current openings | Estimated number of openings yearly | Estimated number of annual openings over next 5 years | Average salary $000/year | Are qualified applicants readily available to you? (Yes/No) | Is there a need for additional training opportunities for this category in your area? (Yes/No) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EMT Intermediate | | | | | | | |
| EMT Paramedic | | | | | | | |
| Medical Job Tech. (MLT)(2yr.) | | | | | | | |
| Medical Technologist(4yr) | | | | | | | |
| Histologic Technician (2yr) | | | | | | | |
| Cytotechnologist | | | | | | | |
| Medical Secretary | | | | | | | |
| Medical Assistant (CMA) | | | | | | | |

| | Do you employ this category? (Yes/No) | Number of current openings | Estimated number of openings yearly | Estimated number of annual openings over next 5 years | Average salary $000/year | Are qualified applicants readily available to you? (Yes/No) | Is there a need for additional training opportunities for this category in your area? (Yes/No) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dental Assistant (1yr) | | | | | | | |
| Dental Hygienist (2yr) | | | | | | | |
| Biomedical Electronics Technician (2yr) | | | | | | | |
| Medical Records Technician (MTR) (2yr) | | | | | | | |
| Other (please specify) | | | | | | | |
| Other (please specify) | | | | | | | |



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